

Message Text

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ORIGIN INT-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 EB-08 OES-07 IO-14 L-03
CEQ-01 EPA-04 COME-00 SMI-01 /056 R

DRAFTED BY INTERIOR:TWOLKERSTORFER:JH
APPROVED BY EB/OT/STA:TO'HERRON
EB/OT/STA:GWHITE
EA/ANP:TWAIDA
OES/ENP/EN:CSANDERS

-----024974 020816Z /14

R 012219Z DEC 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

UNCLAS STATE 287091

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, AS

SUBJECT: ENDANGERED SPECIES -- KANGAROOS

REF: A) CANBERRA 8216 B) CANBERRA 7983

1. PRELIMINARY CONTACTS ON REVIEW OF KANGAROO ISSUE WERP
MADE IN GENEVA AND TOKYO. KEITH SCHREINER, ASSOCIATE
DIRECTOR, UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, AND
TERRY WOLKERSTORFER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE
AND PARKS, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, MET IN GENEVA WITH
ROBERT BODEN, AUSTRALIA NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
DURING SPECIAL WORKING SESSION OF CONVENTION ON INTER-
NATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES, 17-28 OCTOBER.

2. WOLKERSTORFER MET IN TOKYO WITH DR. C.A. ANDERSON,
SCIENCE COUNSELOR OF AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY IN JAPAN, WHO
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WAS AUSTRALIAN OBSERVER AT U.S.-JAPAN COOPERATIVE PROGRAM
IN NATURAL RESOURCES PANEL ON CONSERVATION, PARKS AND
RECREATION. ANDERSON CABLED SUBSTANCE OF CONVERSATION
TO CANBERRA ABOUT 1 NOVEMBER. (REPLY TO ANDERSON'S CABLE,
HE SAID, INDICATED THAT BODEN ALREADY HAD REPORTED
INITIATIVE BY SCHREINER AND WOLDERSTORFER AND THAT AN

AUSTRALIAN RESPONSE WAS IN THE WORKS.)

3. AFTER PRELIMINARY CONVERSATIONS WITH JOHN SPINKS, CHIEF OF US ENDANGERED SPECIES OFFICE, AND HAROLD O'CONNOR, DEPUTY ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, USFWS, THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON--ROBERT SWIFT, MINISTER COMMERCIAL; DR. JAMES WHITTEM, SCIENTIFIC ATTACHE; AND CHRISTOPHER WARD, SECOND SECRETARY COMMERCIAL--MET 2 NOVEMBER WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR ROBERT HERBST. THEY DELIVERED AUSTRALIAN AIDE MEMOIRE.

4. ON ALL THREE OCCASIONS, AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVES WERE GIVEN THE SAME MESSAGE: DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND USFWS ARE WILLING TO RECONSIDER THE ENTIRE KANGAROO QUESTION, INCLUDING THE LISTING OF THE KANGAROO AS A THREATENED SPECIES UNDER U.S. LAW AND THE BAN ON IMPORT OF KANGAROO PRODUCTS.

RE "GROUND RULES" MENTIONED IN GOA NOTE PER REFTTEL B, AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATIVES WERE TOLD THAT MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD PROCEDURES FOR REEXAMINATION, BASED ON THE MANDATE OF THE U.S. ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT OF 1973 AND THE CRITERIA FOR LISTING SPECIES AS ENDANGERED OR THREATENED MUST BE DEVELOPED.

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IF AUSTRALIA AGREES, FWS THEN WOULD SEND A TEAM OF BIOLOGISTS TO AUSTRALIA TO WORK WITH AUSTRALIAN EXPERTS IN DETERMINING POPULATION AND POPULATION TRENDS OF KANGAROO SPECIES IN QUESTION, USING THE AGREED PROCEDURES.

5. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WILL TAKE WHATEVER ACTION IS DICTATED BY RESULTS OF THE JOINT STUDY. IF THE BIOLOGICAL DATA SHOW THAT BY THE CRITERIA OF THE 1973 ACT THE KANGAROO IS THREATENED, IT WILL REMAIN ON THE LIST. IF THE DATA SHOW THAT BY THOSE CRITERIA THE KANGAROO IS NOT THREATENED, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WILL TAKE ACTION TO REMOVE THE KANGAROO FROM THE THREATENED LIST AND TO LIFT THE IMPORT BAN.

6. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BELIEVES THAT IF THE 1973 ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT IS TO PROTECT TRULY ENDANGERED SPECIES IT MUST BE CREDIBLE AND ENFORCIBLE, AND THAT THE LISTING OF ANIMALS FOR POLITICAL OR EMOTIONAL REASONS DIMINISHES THE LAW'S EFFECTIVENESS. INTERIOR ALSO UNDERSTANDS THE DETRIMENTAL EFFECT OF THE KANGAROO CONTROVERSY ON OTHER TRADE AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA.

7. DESPITE AUSTRALIAN PERCEPTIONS OF STALLING OR FOOT-DRAGGING, INTERIOR BELIEVES IT HAS MADE A SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROPOSAL THAT CAN LEAD DIRECTLY AND EXPEDITIOUSLY TO A RESOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM. INTERIOR HAS DROPPED PREVIOUS DEMANDS FOR STATE OR FEDERAL KANGAROO CONSERVATION OR MANAGEMENT PLANS IN AUSTRALIA AND FOR LISTING OF THE KANGAROO ON APPENDIX 2 OF THE CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES.

8. INTERIOR ANTICIPATES SUBSTANTIAL OPPOSITION TO ITS NEW PROPOSAL FROM CONSERVATION GROUPS AND THEIR WELL-ORGANIZED CONGRESSIONAL LOBBY. SEVERAL GROUPS ALREADY HAVE CONTACTED SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR ANDRUS TO

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PROTEST INTERIOR'S INTENTION TO REEXAMINE THE KANGAROO QUESTION. ASSISTANT SECRETARY HERBST MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE GROUPS 29 NOVEMBER. HE DEFENDED INTERIOR'S POSITION ON BOTH LEGAL AND SCIENTIFIC GROUNDS.

9. REQUEST EMBASSY URGE DEPARTMENT OF OVERSEAS TRADE AND OTHER RELEVANT GOA AGENCIES TO AUTHORIZE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY, WASHINGTON, TO BEGIN PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS AS SUGGESTED BY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.

10. DEPARTMENT HAS REPLIED TO OCTOBER 13, 1977 AIDE MEMOIRE FROM AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY ALONG THE ABOVE LINES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPECIES PROTECTION
Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Document Number: 1977STATE287091
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: TWOLKERSTORFER:JH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770447-0179
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197712103/aaaadjzg.tel
Line Count: 149
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a2eacefb-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN INT
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 CANBERRA 8216, 77 CANBERRA 7983
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 110441
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ENDANGERED SPECIES -- KANGAROOS
TAGS: ETRD, AS
To: CANBERRA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a2eacefb-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009